Self Advocacy, Self-Determination and the Student-Led IEP

Susan Zipprich, M.Ed.
PVUSD
Transition Specialist
Sp.Ed. Teacher
szipprich@pvschools.net

Kathleen Mettler, LMSW
PVUSD
School Social Worker
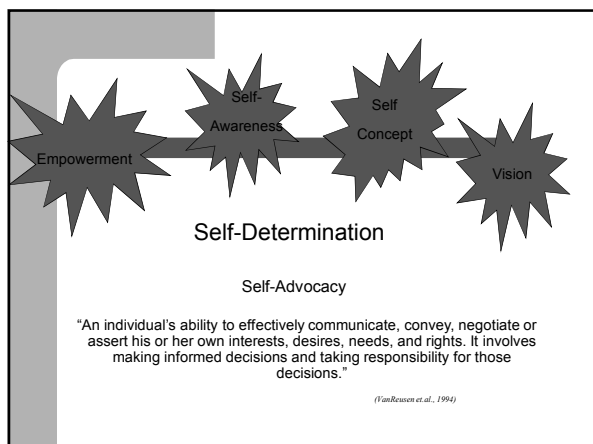kmettler@pvschools.net

---

Self-Determination

"Self determination is an expression of personal agency." This means "understanding one's strengths, limitations, needs, and preferences well enough to evaluate options and goals and determine a clear vision for one's future."

(Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001; Whitney-Thomas & Moloney, 2001)

Self-Determination

"Self-determination includes internal characteristics, such as a consciousness about oneself, a belief in oneself, and a feeling of empowerment, as well as behaviors, such as goal setting and attaining, decision-making, problem solving, and finding supports to help meet one's goals.

(Eisenman & Chamberlin, 2001; Whitney-Thomas & Moloney, 2001)

Self-Determination

Self-Awareness · Self Concept · Empowerment · Vision

Self-Advocacy

"An individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his or her own interests, desires, needs, and rights. It involves making informed decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions."

(VanReusen et.al., 1994)

NSTTAC
(National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center)

- Identified 33 Evidence-Based Practices in Secondary Transition

  - 3 Student-Focused Planning
  - 26 Student Development
  - 1 Family Involvement
  - 3 Program Structure

www.nsttac.org

NSTTAC
(National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center)

Student-Focused IEP includes:
- Involving Students in the IEP process
- Using the Self-Advocacy Strategy (IPLAN)
- Using the Self-Directed IEP

Student Development Includes:
- Social Skills
- Self-Advocacy Skills
- Self-Determination Skills
- Community skills
- Self Care and Management
- Employment Skills
- etc.

NSTTAC
*(National Secondary Transition
Technical Assistance Center)*

- Identified 16 predictors of post-secondary success in employment, education and independent living.

- Self Determination/Self Advocacy are predictors for both educational and employment success.

What does the research say?

- Students with disabilities who are more self-determined are twice as likely to be employed one year after HS.
- Three years after graduation, they are more likely to have employment that includes benefits, and to be living somewhere other than the family home.

(Wehmeyer, 2002)

What does the research say?

Self-Determination status
- Predicts higher quality of life.
- Correlated with more positive post-secondary outcomes including employment, independent living and community inclusion.
- Related to independence level.
- Linked to higher employment and pay levels.

(Chambers, C.R., Wehmeyer, M.L., Saito, Y., Lida, K.M., Lee, Y., & Singh, V. (2007). Self-determination: What do we know? Where do we go? Exceptionality, 15, 3-15.)

Process of Self-Determination

- Knowledge of strengths, weaknesses and preferences.
- Goal Setting
- Making plans and taking action to achieve goals
- Evaluating outcomes.
- Adjusting knowledge, goals and/or plans.

(Martin, J., & Marshall, L. H. (1996).)

Why the Student-Led IEP

- Authentic & meaningful.
- Clear & reciprocal relationship between the IEP process and self-determination.
- Allows student to utilize self-advocacy skills in a safe, supportive environment.
- Supports student growth, independence, and self-determination.
- Increased student self-awareness.
- Increased understanding of disability, legal issues, rights & responsibilities.
- Student ownership.

Getting Started

- Disability
- IEP and Process
- Develop self-knowledge
- Teach skills & practice
- Implementation

Know your Disability

- What is sped?
- What is a disability? Specific
- Review sped file
  - Explain purpose of file and reports
  - Guided research for understanding
  - Identify support sites
- Confidentiality and disclosure

What is an IEP?

- NICHCY IEP Guide
(National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities)
  - IEP Team
  - Sections of IEP
  - IEP goals
  - Transition planning
  - Rights & safeguards
- Your role
  - CEO
  - Preparing (agenda, invites, research, post-secondary & IEP goals & practice)

Self Knowledge

- Portfolio format
  - Surveys and assessments
  - Work samples
  - Vocational activities
  - Employment documents
- TFT: Toolkits for Transition (9th, 10/11, 12th grade)
- Development of IEP and Post-secondary goals

Need to Know

Communication Skills
- Invitations
- Greetings and Introductions
- Giving and Accepting Feedback
- Disagree Appropriately
- Accepting Compliments
- Actively Listening

Other Skills
- Assertiveness
- Decision-Making
- Problem Solving
- Goal Setting
- Identifying Supports

Practice

- Review components of IEP
- Practice run through including:
  - Specific skills
  - Listening to positive feedback
  - Listening to negative feedback

Implementation - The Big Day!

- Formats - PPT/Keynote, Agenda Driven, Scripted, Collage/Poster
- Asking Questions/Clarifying Information
- Evaluation/Follow-up discussion

Strengths, Barriers & Challenges

- Student Empowerment
- Staff Buy-In
- Time
- Scheduling
- Parental support
- Lack of prep time

**Final Questions
or
Comments**

Enjoy the rest of the conference!